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For the kind attention of: **N. FISTAS - Examiner**

Re: International Patent Application No. PCT/IT02/00492  
in the name of Spal S.r.l.

Communication pursuant to Rule 66 PCT

With reference to your Communication dated March 26, 2003, we would point out what follows:

- the Applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner's opinion stated in his communication. Document US-A-5 193 981 (D1) discloses a ventilation unit of the type comprising an electric motor (24), and a fan (10) fitted to the output shaft of the electric motor (24) and comprising a cup-shaped central body (12) and a plurality of blades (18) projecting from the central body (12). As shown in figure 2, the central body (12) comprises an annular wall (16) and a base wall (22).

As shown in figure 1, the base wall (22) is provided with ribs (32) defining neighboring fields (34) (see column 2, lines 67 and 68) each having a through-going passage (44) (see column 3, lines 17-20).

However, D1 does not disclose a through-going passage formed in the annular wall (16).

Therefore, Claim 1 is novel over D1.

- The preamble of Claim 1 relates to a ventilation unit as disclosed in D1 cited by the Examiner and considered by the Applicant the closest prior art (see page 1, lines 15-28 of the present application).

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Starting from the closest prior art, the problem underlying the present invention is to channel out of the ventilation unit the condensate which remains inside the central body (see page 2, lines 1-10 of the present application)

According to the present invention, the solution to this problem is disclosed in the characterising portion of Claim 1.

D1 does not give any hint neither to the above mentioned technical problem nor to its solution as claimed in Claim 1. Indeed, D1 does not suggest to channel out of the ventilation unit the condensate which remains inside the central body by means of at least one through going passage formed in the annular wall of the central body.

On the contrary, D1 suggests to provide the base wall of the central body with at least one through going passage.

Therefore, we believe that Claim 1 is not obvious over D1.

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Owing to the above, we believe that the application is now in order for acceptance.

Yours faithfully,

  
(Dr. Ing. Paolo JORIO)